

Purpose

Center of Expertise for the Preservation of Historic Buildings and Structures

National Register Nominations

The National Register of Historic Places is the official listing established and maintained by the Federal government for identifying properties in the United States worthy of preservation because of their historic value. On October 15, 1966, the 89th Congress enacted Public Law 89-665 authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to expand this "register of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture." The law also created a program of matching grants-in-aid for preservation and restoration projects within the individual states, including the planning and inventory processes. Eligibility for the available funding is made contingent upon completion of an acceptable preservation plan and a State-wide inventory of properties. The Historic Preservation Act also provides for a degree of protection of historic properties from arbitrary destruction or impairment if threatened by a project where Federal funds are involved. Regulations require the consideration of alternatives that would minimize detrimental effects, and provide for arbitration in the event that an agreement cannot be reached. Certain criteria must be satisfied if a property is to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register. See the National Register criteria and nominations below. These are standards designed as a guide to the states and the Secretary of the Interior in the process of evaluating new nominations. The criteria primarily address the quality of significance, both real and potential, and certain types of properties are specifically excluded. At the Federal level, the National Register program is administered by the Department of the Interior. At the State level, the program is administered by the State Office of Historic Preservation.

Nomination Criteria, Part 1

Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places must go through several stages of consideration before being placed in the Register. Often nominations are prepared by persons or organizations within various counties, and are submitted first to the State Historic Preservation Office. Frequently, the State office itself nominates historic properties within the State. Nominations must be submitted on standard National Register forms requiring specific information, including among other things, ownership, location, historical summary, physical description, recent and historical photographs, and historical integrity and significance. The Army Corps of Engineers' Center of Expertise (CX) Preservation of Historic Buildings and Structures can provide complete assistance in procedures for nominating historic...

- buildings,

- structures (monuments, etc.)
- landscapes
- sites
- districts
- objects (e.g. vessels)

In addition, the CX has years of experience in working with State Historic Preservation Offices, both within Washington State and in other states as well. As part of an inventory and evaluation study the CX performed for McChord Air Force Base in Washington State and for Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland, the TCX identified historic properties on the bases, evaluated them against criteria, and nominated the eligible properties to the National Register.

Nomination Criteria, Part 2

When an agency-owned or -controlled property might be historic but has never actually been evaluated, it is the agency's responsibility to ascertain whether the property is eligible for the National Register. The agency must review and apply the National Register criteria to the property. Furthermore, agencies are required to make eligibility determinations for historic properties in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office. For these reasons, it is essential for an agency to understand what qualifies a property for National Register listing. The Army Corps of Engineers' Center of Expertise (CX) Preservation of Historic Buildings and Structures can provide agencies guidance and assistance in applying the National Register criteria and State-specific criteria to their properties. Criteria for evaluating properties for nomination to the National Register are established by the Department of the Interior and described in the Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR 60.4. Following is the language from the Interior Department's regulations for National Register eligibility: National Register criteria for evaluation. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and...

- are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, or
- are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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